



CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
**Department of Toxic Substances Control**

## News Release

T - 23 - 14

Miriam Barcellona Ingenito, Acting Director

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

November 24, 2014

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### **Sims Group USA to Pay Nearly \$2.4 Million for Unlawful Release and Disposal of Hazardous Waste**

**SACRAMENTO** – Sims Group USA will pay nearly \$2.4 million to settle a civil environmental enforcement action resulting from an investigation of its Redwood City facility by the Department of Toxic Substances Control's (DTSC) Office of Criminal Investigations (OCI).

The California Attorney General's Office filed the action in San Mateo County Superior Court and negotiated the settlement on behalf of DTSC.

DTSC alleges that scrap metal recycling operations at the Sims Facility at 699 Seaport Boulevard in Redwood City, releases light fibrous material, some of which deposits onto nearby property and becomes a waste. Some of the waste, which resembles dryer lint, contains cadmium, copper, lead, and zinc at levels that exceed hazardous waste regulatory thresholds and is considered toxic.

The release, migration, deposition and accumulation of this waste outside the facility constitute the unlawful disposal of hazardous waste and a failure to minimize the possibility of a release of hazardous waste.

OCI has made investigation and pursuit of enforcement of such cases a top priority.

"The control of hazardous pollution that falls from the air and accumulates on the ground is an important enforcement initiative for DTSC," said Miriam Ingenito, Acting Director for DTSC. "The enclosure of the Sims facility will further protect the community and the environment by controlling the releases of metal-contaminated waste from the shredding operations."

Under the settlement, Sims will pay \$2,393,814 as follows:

- \$825,000 to DTSC in civil penalties and reimbursement of DTSC's investigative costs;
- \$125,000 to the Environmental Enforcement and Training Account Program as a Supplemental Environmental Project; and
- At least \$1,443,814 to upgrade the facility beyond current regulatory requirements.

The facility upgrades are designed to reduce the potential for release of heavy metal-contaminated light fibrous material. They include construction of buildings to enclose the metal shredder, the screening unit and associated magnets; improving the air pollution control system; and constructing additional perimeter fencing.

Until the upgrades are complete, Sims will conduct weekly inspections to determine whether light fibrous material has accumulated on private properties and public sidewalks and streets near the facility and immediately remove any deposits. Any light fibrous material that might be released during the short term required to complete the upgrades should not exceed the standards set forth in the Bay Area Air Quality Management District Permit to Operate, which are designed to protect human health.

OCI is a special investigation unit within DTSC consisting of peace officers, scientists, and a computer forensic specialist who investigate criminal misconduct involving hazardous waste management in California. OCI is the only criminal investigation unit within the California Environmental Protection Agency.

To see the judgment entered by the San Mateo County Superior Court, click [here](#).



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FOR GENERAL INQUIRIES: Contact the Department of Toxic Substances Control by phone at (800) 728-6942 or visit [www.dtsc.ca.gov](http://www.dtsc.ca.gov). To report illegal handling, discharge, or disposal of hazardous waste, call the Waste Alert Hotline at (800) 698-6942.

***The Mission of DTSC is to protect California's people and environment from harmful effects of toxic substances by restoring contaminated properties, identifying and promoting safer ingredients in consumer products, and ensuring stewardship through enforcement, regulation and pollution prevention.***